

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## Bro. Gans in W. Va.

On Friday morning, Sept. 30th, in company with Daniel Moser, I started for Clifton Mills, reaching Bro. Martin Ridenour's in good time for services that evening; preached to an attentive congregation. On Saturday attended church meeting at which their organization was completed. A clerk and treasurer was duly elected. Also Bro. S. W. Wilt was ordained to the full power of the ministry. At five o'clock in the evening, a faithful little band of zealous worshippers met to attend to the ordinances of the Lord's house. The meeting was quiet and orderly and we hope some good impressions were made. Preached the following morning and returned home the same day. Thanks to the Brethren and Sisters for their kindness and may the blessing of God rest on all.

JOHN D. GANS.

Uniontown, Pa.

## Roann, Ind.

I thought you would like to hear from this place once more; as there has not been any thing in the EVANGELIST for some time, from here. We are all trying to do what we can for our Master. Our communion was held on the 29th of Sept. It was a very disagreeable evening. But there were more communicants there than I have seen at that place for some time, and we had a good meeting. I felt the Lord blessed us on that occasion. Bro. Summers, Heeter and Fitzgerald were the ministers present. There were a good many members from adjoining churches present over which we felt thankful and glad.

I will also say that Bro. Palmer commenced a short series of meetings at Jamesville on the first day of Sept. and continued until the evening of the 6th. Bro. Palmer preached six sermons and Bro. Summers one. The meetings were very good and well attended. Not a member was living there and the people were well pleased with the meetings and said they were sorry the meetings closed so soon. They invited him to come back again and stay longer.

KATIE EIKENBERY.

## A Sermon by Pres. Chas. G. Finney.

TEXT.—"Say unto them, As I live saith the Lord God. I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"—Ezekiel 33: 11.

I believe it is a fact generally admitted that there is much less conscience manifested by men and women in nearly all the walks of life than there was forty years ago. There is justly much complaint of this, and their seems to be but little prospect of reformation. The rings and frauds and villainies in high and low places, among all ranks of men, are most alarming, and one is almost compelled to ask, "can nobody be safely trusted?" Now what is the cause of this degeneracy? Doubtless there are many causes that contribute more or less directly to it; but I am persuaded that the fault is more in the ministry and public press than in any or all things else.

It has been fashionable now for many years to ridicule and decry Puritanism. Ministers have ceased, in a great measure, to probe the conscience of men with spiritual law of God. So far as my knowledge extends, there has been a great letting down and ignoring the searching claims of God's law, as revealed in God's word. This law is the only standard of true morality. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The law is the quickener of the human conscience. Just in proportion as the spirituality of the law of God is kept out of view, will there be manifest a decay of conscience. This must be the inevitable result. Let ministers ridicule Puritanism, attempt to preach the Gospel without thoroughly probing the conscience with the divine law, and this must result in at least a partial paralysis of the moral sense. The error that lies at the foundation of this decay of individual and public conscience, originates, no doubt, in the pulpit. The proper guardians of the public conscience have, I fear, very much neglected to expound and insist upon obedience to the moral law. It is plain that some of our most popular preachers are phrenologists. Phrenology has no organ

of free-will; hence has no moral agency, no moral law and moral obligation in any proper sense of those terms. A consistent phrenologist can have no proper ideas of moral obligation, of moral guilt, blameworthiness and retribution.

Some years since, a brother of one of our most popular preachers heard me preach on the text, "be ye reconciled to God." I went on to show, among other things, that being reconciled to God implied being reconciled to the execution of his law. He called on me the next morning and among other things said that neither himself nor two of his brothers, whom he named, all preachers, had naturally any conscience. "We have," said he, "no such ideas in our minds of sin, guilt, justice, retribution as you and father have. We cannot preach as you do on those subjects." He continued: "I am striving to cultivate a conscience, and I think I begin to understand what it is. But naturally neither I nor the two brothers I have named have any conscience."

Now these three ministers have repeatedly appeared in their writings before the public. I have read much that they have written, and not infrequently the sermons of one of them, and have been struck with the manifest want of conscience in his sermons and writings. He is a phrenologist, and hence he has in his theological views no free will, no moral agency, and nothing that is really a logical result of free will and moral agency. He can ridicule Puritanism and the great doctrines of the orthodox faith; and, indeed, his whole teachings, so far as it has fallen under my eye, most lamentably shows the want of moral discrimination. I should judge from his writings that the true ideas of moral depravity, guilt and ill-desert, in the true acceptance of those terms, have no place in his mind. Indeed, as a consistent phrenologist, such ideas have no right in his mind. They are necessarily excluded by his philosophy. I do not know how extensively phrenology has poisoned the minds of different denominations; but I have observed with pain that many ministers who wrote for the public press fail to reach the consciences of men. They fail to go to the bottom of the matter and insist upon obedience to the moral law as alone acceptable to God. They seem to me to "make void the law through faith." They seem to hold up a different standard from that which is inculcated in Christ's sermons on the Mount, which was Christ's exposition of the moral law. Christ expressly taught in that sermon that there was no salvation without conformity to the rule of life laid down in that sermon. True faith in Christ will always and inevitably beget a holy life. But I fear it has become fashionable to preach what amounts to an antinomian Gospel. The rule of life promulgated in the Gospel is precisely that of the moral law. These four things are expressly affirmed of true faith—of the faith of the Gospel.

1. It establishes the law.
2. It works by love.
3. It purifies the heart.
4. It overcomes the world.

These are but different forms of affirming that true faith does, as a matter of fact, produce a holy life. If it did not, it would "make void the law." The true Gospel is not preached where obedience to the moral law as the only rule of life is not insisted upon. Wherever there is a failure to do this in the instructions of any pulpit, it will inevitably be seen that the hearers of such a mutilated Gospel will have very little conscience. We need more Boanerges or sons of thunder in the pulpit. We need men that will flash forth the law of God like vivid lightning, and arouse the consciences of men. We need more Puritanism in the pulpit. To be sure some of the Puritans were extremists. But still, under their teaching there was a very different state of the individual and public conscience from what exists in these days. These old, stern, grand vindicators of the government of God would have thundered and lightened till they had almost demolished their pulpits, if any such immoralities had shown themselves under their instructions, as are common in these days. In a great measure the periodical press takes its tone from the pulpit. The universal literature of the present day shows

conclusively that the moral sense of the people needs toning up, and some of our most fascinating preachers have become the favorites of infidels, skeptics of every grade, Universalists, and the most abandoned characters, and has the offense of the cross ceased, or is the cross kept out of view? Has the holy law of God, with its stringent precepts, and its awful penalty, become popular with the unconverted, or is it ignored in the pulpit, and the preacher praised for that neglect of duty for which he should be despised? I believe the only possible way to arrest this downward tendency in private and public morals is the holding up from the pulpit in this land, with unsparing faithfulness, the whole Gospel of God, including, as the only rule of life, the perfect and holy law of God.

The holding up of the law will reveal the moral depravity of the heart, and the holding forth of the cleansing blood of Christ will cleanse the heart from sin. My beloved brethren in the ministry, is there not a great want in the public inculcation of the pulpit upon this subject. We are set for the defence of the blessed Gospel, and for the vindication of God's holy law. I pray you let us prove the consciences of our hearers, let us thunder forth the law and Gospel of God until our voices reach the capitol of this nation, through our representatives in Congress. It is now very common for the secular papers even to publish extracts of sermons. Let us give the reporters of the press such work to do as will make their ears and the ears of their readers tingle. Let our railroad rings, our stock gamblers, our officials of every grade, hear from its pulpit, if they come within the sound, such wholesale puritanic preaching as will arouse them to better thoughts and a better life. Away with this milk and water preaching of a love of Christ that has no holiness or moral discrimination in it. Away with preaching a love of God that is not angry with sinners every day. Away with preaching a Christ not crucified for sin.

Christ crucified for the sins of the world is the Christ that the people need. Let us rid ourselves of the just imputation of neglecting to preach the law of God until the consciences of men are asleep. Such a collapse of conscience in this land could never have existed if the Puritan element in our preaching had not in great measure fallen out.

Some years ago I was preaching in a congregation whose pastor had died some months before. He seemed to have been almost universally popular with his church and the community. His church seemed to have nearly idolized him. Everybody was speaking in his praise and holding him up as an example, and yet both the church and community clearly demonstrated that they had had an unfaithful pastor, a man who loved and sought the applause of his people. I heard so much of his inculcations and saw so much of the legitimate fruits of his teachings, that I felt constrained to tell the people from the pulpit that they had had an unfaithful minister: that such fruits as were apparent on every side, both within and without the church, could never have resulted from a faithful presentation of the Gospel.

This assertion would doubtless, have greatly shocked them had it been made under other circumstances, but, as the way had been prepared, they did not seem disposed to gainsay it. Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discrimination, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in religion, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our Government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it. Let us not ignore this fact, my dear brethren, but let us lay it to heart, and be thoroughly awake to our responsibility in respect to the morals of this nation.—EVANGELICAL MESSENGER.

There are some who never seem to feel any spiritual wants, and who, if they have their food and shelter, property and friends, would probably never ask the question—Is there a God?—Rev. Peter S. Menzies.